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opinion of the writer quoted by J. P. that the South has been more distressed than the North, by reason of the circulation of paper, or consent to obtain the praise of Lord Lauderdale, for perseverance in the gold system at a heavy loss; he erroneously calculates that the quantity of specie has rather increased than diminished in Ireland, since the restriction. Facts are strongly against this assertion; these writers are closet theorists, and the reasonings of such are often overthrown by practical discoveries. I have heard, that at one time during the panic of an invasion, guineas bore a premium, particularly in Hampshire, and probably occasionally a premium might have been charged in London; but I apprehend it never became general, for this very sufficient reason, that the English did not require a gold circulation for carrying on any branch of their manufactures; for I admit, had such a circumstance occurred with them, guineas would have borne a premium. I was in England in 1802 and 1806, and conversed with mercantile men on the subject, but never discovered that guineas bore a regular or general premium with them.

As to the question of guineas being now to be procured in sufficient quantities to carry on the linen trade of Ulster, I appeal to the knowledge of any one, who is practically acquainted with the quantity of specie in circulation with us, for a solution; the premium on guineas now being lower than when they were more used, is no proof that they could be procured in sufficient quantities.

In a provincial circulation, there is always an influx from the extremities to the capital, and from causes which it is not easy to explore, the guineas in circulation have very greatly diminished; so that though the premium is lower, the quantity in circulation is less, and if the demand for them was as great as it was some years ago, the premium must advance most enormously. A higher premium, which in itself would be a great inconvenience would not however restore to us the guineas, which are not now in the country.

I consider this diminution of specie as an irremediable inconvenience under our present circumstances. The procuring of guineas is a heavy tax on trade, and from this tax I wish us to free ourselves. The command of guineas in sufficient quantities is not under our controul. Let us make the best of our situation, for the question is not, whether we shall have a full supply of guineas; that is impracticable, but whether we shall subject ourselves to much inconvenience and expense, to keep up *a partial and extremely limited supply.*

Studying brevity, I forbear to repeat arguments already advanced in the Commercial Reports, or to enlarge further on the subject at present than just to express a wish that J. P. will continue to write his sentiments freely, and I hope they will always find ready admission into the pages of the Magazine. It is by free discussion that truth can be properly elicited. Men will continue to differ, as long as they view subjects through different media; and free discussion without the asperities of controversy, I wish may ever be the distinguishing characteristic of the Belfast Magazine. K.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

SIR,

DR. BUCHAN, in his domestic medicine, has presumed to say, that literary pursuits are injurious to the constitution, and therefore naturally enough from his premises, concludes that such were not by nature intended for man; allowing his premises, the deduction he makes cannot, with propriety, be disputed; let us however examine how far his first assertion is to be credited. It may be of infinite consequence, to mankind in general, to do away an opinion of such a nature, sanctioned by one who stands so high in literary reputation; against the Dr's. assertion, allow me to oppose the following facts.

Of the number of eminent men, of modern times, in mathematical and astronomical pursuits, I have chosen indiscriminately such, whose names and ages are subjoined. It will be seen that their periods of life have been, with very few exceptions, much beyond the common lot of mortality. Now, if this be the case, those who would be inclined to advocate the

Dr's. opinion, are exposed to this dilemma; either, they must acknowledge that longevity is as likely to be attained by astronomers and mathematicians, as by any other class of men, and that, in this respect at least, the opinion of the Dr. is fallacious. W.

Newry, 8th Oct. 1808.

Names,	*Ages.*	*Names.*	*Ages.*
Fontenelle,	100	Stewart,	68
Duhamel,	93	Hook,	67
Sharpe,	91	Huygens,	67
Long,	91	Bianchini,	67
Wren,	91	Desaguiliers,	66
Casati,	90	D'Alembert,	66
Allen,	90	Kepler,	65
Cassini, J. D.	87	Musenne,	60
Halley,	86	Bouguer,	60
Wallis,	88	Wilkins,	58
Newton,	85	Albert Durer,	57
Longomontanus,	85	Saunderson,	67
Tonstal,	84	Tycho Brahe,	55
De Moivre,	87	Simson,	55
Piccolomini Fra.	84	Des Cartes,	54
Mercator, Geo.	82	Mercator, Nich.	54
Viviani,	81	Bezout,	54
Bernouilli, jun.	81	Clairaut.	52
Emerson,	81	La Caille,	49
Cassini, Jas.	80	M'Laurin,	48
Alphonsus,	81	Barrow,	47
Nonius,	80	Torricelli,	40
Stiffler,	80	Amonton,	42
Kircher,	80	Pascal,	39
Soffer,	79	Mayer,	39
Le Clerc,	79	Cotes,	34
Lilly,	79	Horrox,	22
Derham,	78	Purback,	39
Galileo,	78	Roberval,	73
Delahire,	78	Lewenhoeck,	81
Ozanam,	77	Lauden,	71
Hevelius,	76	Cheyne,	72
Wolfius,	76	Martin,	78
Euler, sen.	76	Oughtred,	86
Newinhit,	76	Reaumur,	74
Nicoli,	75	Camus.	69
Clavius,	75	Baker,	65
Scheiner,	75	Barlowe,	80
Maignan,	75	Napier,	68
Briggs,	74	Regiomontanus,	40
Cardan,	74	Regis,	75
Flamstead,	73	Scaliger,	69
Riccioli,	73	Vossius	72
Regneau,	72	Bernouilli, Dan.	83
Borelli,	72	Do. James,	51
Cassini, Cæsar,	71	Do. James, jun.	30
Ward,	71	Jones,	74
Bradley,	70	Whiston,	84
Schoner,	70	Sturm,	68
Copernicus,	70	Maraldi,	64
Piccolomini, Alex.	70	Petit,	67
Leibnitz,	70	Rolle,	67
Berkley,	69	Hayes,	82
Verignon,	68		

Of the above persons, the ages of Simson, Barrow, Amonton, and Regiomontanus, should not be taken into account, as the first shortened his existence by dissipation, and the three last died, Barrow of a fever, Amonton of a complaint in his bowels, and Regiomontanus of poison; so that, of the remainder, the average age, is fully 70 years. It will not be an easy matter, in any common walk or profession of life, to produce so many instances of longevity, in the same number, taken indiscriminately.

Permit me to add a few interesting particulars of some of the above-mentioned personages.

Of the three Cassinis, grandfather, son, and grandson, the first was born on the 8th June, 1625, and the third died, of the small pox, September, 4th 1784: so that the three generations lived a period of more than 159 years, and which, but for the circumstance, which terminated the life of the last, might have been extended at least to eight or nine years further. The fourth Cassini, in direct descent from the family, is still alive and is in nothing inferior to his ancestors in astronomical reputation, a circumstance perhaps unparalleled in the annals of literature.

Cardan was not only a mathematician, but, what was usual in the age in which he lived, an astrologer; on the authority of Scaliger, his life terminated in the following manner; he had calculated the period when he was fated to depart this life, and not to discredit his astrological reputation, he starved himself to death on the arrival of the predicted time.

As a singular instance of Newton's inquisitive genius, at an early period of life, take the following anecdote; he has been frequently observed, when a boy at school, endeavouring to ascertain the force of the wind, by leaping in the direction of the wind, and the contrary way, and observing how much farther he could leap, in the one direction, than in the other.

Clairault, was able to read and write at four years of age; at nine studied algebra; at eleven was complete master of conic sections, and between twelve and thirteen, had the honour

of reading before the academy of sciences, a memoir on certain geometrical curves, invented by himself.

Berkley's *Analyst*, was written with the avowed design, of proving the fallacy of certain parts of mathematics, and that mathematicians are as liable to give credence to as incomprehensible doctrines, as are to be met with in Christianity; the design took its rise from the account of Garth's last conversation with Addison, wherein the former avowed his utter disbelief of the tenets of Christianity, on the authority of Halley, who, he asserted, declared the Christian religion to be incapable of demonstration.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

ACCOUNT OF THE LATE MELANCHOLY SHIPWRECK AT BALLYCASTLE.

(Communicated by the Rev. L. A. Conolly.)

ON Saturday the 9th of October, about four o'clock, P. M. a large brig appeared in the dangerous channel between Rathlin and the Irish Coast; a signal of distress waved from her topmast, her sails were rent in several places, and her whole appearance indicated the injuries she had already suffered, and her apprehension of dangers, still greater. At five o'clock the storm became more violent, the waves broke furiously against the steep cliffs, that rise along this bold shore, the brig became unmanageable, she approached a projecting precipice (called from a ruin on its summit the Castle Point) and destruction appeared inevitable. In this deplorable condition the master and crew, amounting in all to nine persons, launched the boat and got in, although the immense breakers around them afforded but a slender hope of their ever reaching the shore. In a few minutes after the departure of the crew, the brig struck on a rock near the base of the Castle Point.

There is a secret sympathy in every heart, that unites man to man, and that, when strongly excited, shows human nature in its most engaging light, and few have been the instances in which that amiable principle has appeared more lively than in the present; nearly two hundred persons who had collected on the strand, with mouruful anxiety, turned their eyes to the crew, to whose perilous situation, from the height of the surges and the want of a life-boat, they could not possibly render any assistance. For twenty minutes did the little boat alternately rise on the billows, and again sink from the view; at length after many an arduous struggle, she approached the strand. The spectators anxiously strove, by acclamations and huzzas, to animate the exertions of the almost exhausted seamen. An immense breaker now rapidly pursued them, it rose above them, it covered them; but scarcely had the crowd on shore expressed their anguish by a groan, when the boat again safely rose with all her crew! tenfold acclamations of friendly encouragement burst from those on shore! The boat was gaining the strand, hope seemed as if to renovate the strength of the weary seamen, and joyful satisfaction was felt by all the multitude, when another violent breaker appeared tumbling to the shore. The sailors redoubled their exertions, the croud for a few moments were silent, it was an instant of dreadful suspense to all! The breaker overlooked them, it raised them for a moment, then dashed the bow of their boat against the sand (for they were now within a few fathoms of land) the boat overset, and without a moment to supplicate the mercy of that God into whose presence they were hurried, all sunk to eternity, save one Swedish lad, who clung to an oar, from which he was extricated by the laudable humanity of Mr. James M'Allister, Mr. Hugh Hill, son of the Rev. Mr. Hill, and Alexander Weir, who at the risk of their lives swam out to save him. Too much praise cannot be given to the spirited exertions of E. D. Boyd, esq. who immediately had a guard of his corps placed on the wreck, and who promptly used every method to save the cargo. Alexander M'Neile, esq. exerted himself in every attempt to save the lives of the unfortunate crew; but his benevolence was only rewarded by its own intent. Edmund M'Gildowney esq. the young gentle-